

Rabbit Hash General Store has withstood ice jams and floods from the Ohio River. The establishment shows the true fortitude of the people who live in this great river town.

The Rabbit Hash General Store has been recognized as a landmark by the Commonwealth of Kentucky since the late 1970s. Nationally, the Rabbit Hash General Store was recognized by the Department of the Interior on the National Register of Historic Places, and the town of Rabbit Hash has been recently honored by First Lady Laura Bush as a Preserve America Community.

I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in congratulating the Rabbit Hash General Store on its 175th anniversary. The Rabbit Hash General Store is a true American treasure.●

TRIBUTE TO BRAYTON WILLIS

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in early 2007, the Army Corps of Engineers will see one of its finest employees retire after 28 years of exemplary service to individuals, communities, and agencies that the Corps serves.

Brayton Willis has lived in Idaho since 1999, serving as the project manager in the Walla Walla District's Boise office. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps and later graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in civil engineering. His career began in Massachusetts where he worked on one of the first environmental impact statements required under the Clean Air Act.

Brayton has worked for the Corps of Engineers in Arizona, Washington and South Carolina, in addition to his work in Idaho. Over the course of his career, he worked at two of the Nation's nuclear facilities providing environmental restoration support to the Department of Energy. He found time to use his expertise in a volunteer capacity as well, helping local communities in California and Puerto Rico assess damages after natural disasters. In Idaho, in particular, Brayton specialized in flood control and issues related to environmental improvement in urban and suburban flood-prone areas. He also worked with local communities to address the critical issues of water and wastewater management and actively sought to involve community stakeholders in flood control and environmental improvement. Brayton preferred to approach flooding and its implications in a preventive manner, before disaster happened. He worked under the firm belief that this method was the most effective and efficient use of taxpayer dollars.

Brayton's work reflects the complementary ideals of caring for communities and the environment. Increased population growth in the West means greater and more sensitive interface between the environment and people. If managed effectively and proactively, the result can be positive for the environment and hold far less risk of dis-

aster for the residential population. Brayton understands this and implemented it in his almost three decades of employment in the Corps. I congratulate Brayton Willis on his retirement and wish him and his wife Debbie well in future endeavors.●

A FRIEND TO IDAHO FISH AND GAME

● Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, on January 1, Idaho sportsmen and women and wildlife will lose a great agency friend in the Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Steve Huffaker, 22-year veteran of Fish and Game, and director since 2002, will be retiring after a full and successful career with this important agency.

Steve has been my great friend and supporter on many issues including wolves, elk, slick spot peppergrass, sage grouse, and cooperative conservation agreements with landowners. His enthusiasm for the Collaboration for the Recovery of the Endangered Species Act and the Owyhee Initiative has been instrumental as I seek the support of others on these important land management policy initiatives. Steve also provided expert advice and recommendations with regard to Federal implementation of these initiatives. He served as an invaluable resource for considerations of wildlife habitat in designations in several State and Federal conservation programs. Steve has been a staunch supporter of my Elk Collaborative; he has worked closely with my staff on these and many other issues over the years. He led the charge to delist grizzly bears, restored confidence and trust with agricultural interests, and remained determined to keep me informed of his activities, ideas, and beliefs. Steve's strengths include a positive demeanor and clear and tough but fair and reasonable stance when he was called upon to defend his position and decisions.

During his years at Fish and Game, Steve served as both Fisheries Bureau chief and Wildlife Bureau chief. He oversaw the agency during a time of constant and frequent change. State management of wolves, fee increases, access issues, conservation, and troubled agency relationships with sportspeople, farmers, and ranchers were some of the challenges that Steve met head-on, and today Idaho is better off with his years of leadership. Now, he will have the time to privately enjoy the fields, streams, and mountains of Idaho that he took such good care of over the years. The man who will be "taking his grandkids fishing" will be sorely missed, and his boots, hard to fill. I wish Steve health, success, and successful hunting and fishing, in his well-deserved retirement.●

MISSISSIPPI HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, SAUK RAPIDS, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Mississippi Heights Elementary

School, in Sauk Rapids, MN, which will soon earn an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Mississippi Heights Elementary School is truly a model of educational success. The school begins each school day by welcoming all staff and pupils in the gym with a unique "Lift Off" program, which is led by the children and is designed to recognize birthdays, make announcements, and strengthen the school's strong sense of community. Another special characteristic of Lift Off is its buddy system, which matches each child in the primary classes with a buddy from the intermediate classes to act as a mentor. The buddies sit together at Lift Off and read to each other before the program begins.

Mississippi Heights is dedicated to a successful literacy initiative, whose goals are: implementation of a balanced literacy program that will include independent shared, guided reading, writing, and read-alouds throughout the day; students' demonstration of individual improvement in reading levels; reading and writing throughout the day which aims toward raising RIGBY and Guided Reading levels for each student; and daily reading aloud by teachers, with 5,000 read-aloud books as a building goal.

Teachers at Mississippi Heights have made reading and writing a top priority, and it shows in their enthusiasm and passion in the classroom. The students' reading and writing scores have improved: More than 30 percent of the students scored in the top level of the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment in 2006, and the school earned four stars from the Minnesota Department of Education in reading this year.

Much of the credit for Mississippi Heights Elementary School's success belongs to its principal, Jean Clark, and the dedicated teachers. The children and staff at Mississippi Heights Elementary School understand that in order to be successful a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where children can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and pupils at Mississippi Heights Elementary School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Mississippi Heights Elementary School in Sauk Rapids for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

NEVIS PUBLIC SCHOOL, NEVIS, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Nevis Public School, in Nevis, MN, which will soon receive an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Nevis Public School is truly a model of educational success. It is a unique

school that utilizes the strengths of the teachers, community, and rural setting, as well as educational opportunities in the Twin Cities and elsewhere to provide its students with an exemplary learning environment.

The school's rural setting and connection to the local community offer many exceptional learning benefits for the students. The school is adjacent to an 80-acre school forest, which is often the classroom for the forest management class, while local rivers serve as the classroom for the aquatic management class. Each Earth Day, students plant trees in the school forest and throughout the community. Fourth-graders attend an annual Agriculture in the Classroom presentation, and sixth-graders learn about lakes and aquatic management at the Freshwater Festival.

The school is committed to a well-rounded education for its students and makes a strong effort to expose them to learning opportunities outside of the community, as well. Students have gone on ecological trips to Russia and Peru; the band and choir have traveled to Chicago; and students are given a variety of opportunities to travel to the Twin Cities for theatrical, sporting, and educational events. Students in the art program have been selected to display their work at the State capitol; and, for the past 3 years, Nevis School students have earned scholarships to attend the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

In 2006, Nevis School was recognized as an "outperformer" by Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services. Nevis School was one out of 22 schools in Minnesota to be recognized for having significantly higher percentages of students who scored proficient or above on State reading and math tests than other Minnesota school districts with similar levels of student poverty.

Much of the credit for Nevis Public School's success belongs to its principal, Jodi Sandmeyer, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Nevis Public School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Nevis Public School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Nevis Public School in Nevis for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

TRAILVIEW SCHOOL, MORA, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Trailview School, in Mora, MN, which will soon receive an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Trailview School is truly a model of educational success. The school has al-

ways had lofty expectations for the students. The highly qualified staff provides a challenging and enriching curriculum that encourages student success. The personnel at Trailview go above and beyond to connect with students by providing a variety of after-school enrichment programs. Respect for others and school pride are evident throughout the school.

Trailview School's afterschool programs were all suggested by the students and significantly enrich the students' learning experience. Some of the most popular programs are cake decorating, architectural drafting, Spanish, book club, chess club, Yu-Gi-Oh card club, quilt making, nutritious snacks, junior master gardener's club, and scrapbooking. There are also a variety of supplementary and enrichment programs offered during the day.

The Trailview School and its staff have received a variety of awards in recognition of the school's exceptional learning environment. In 2002, Trailview School received the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association School of Excellence award. In 2003, Principal Wendie Anderson was nominated to the Minnesota Alliance for Arts in Education by the local Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency committee, and she received the honor of being named "Minnesota's Leading School Administrator in Arts Education." In 2004, she was named "MESPA's Minnesota National Distinguished Principal." Trailview School has also been recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education as a five-star school in reading in 2003 and 2004, and as a four-star school in reading in 2005.

Much of the credit for Trailview School's success belongs to its principal, Wendie Anderson, and the dedicated teachers. The children and staff at Trailview School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where children can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and pupils at Trailview School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Trailview School in Mora for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

LANCASTER PUBLIC SCHOOL, LANCASTER, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I honor Lancaster Public School, in Lancaster, MN, which will soon receive an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Lancaster Public School is truly a model of educational success. Members of the staff, who understand that not all children learn the same way or at the same rate but that all children are capable of learning, work hard to personalize Lancaster's learning environ-

ment to ensure that every student's educational needs are met. To achieve this goal, the staff uses a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate individual learning styles. The result is a creative learning environment that is flexible, innovative, and highly successful.

Lancaster Public School has been recognized by Standard & Poor's School Evaluation Services as a district that outperformed demographically similar school districts in reading and math proficiency for 4 the past 4 school years. Lancaster Public School is 1 of only 10 school districts in Minnesota that have attained this status. This achievement is particularly impressive because Lancaster is the smallest school in the group, with only 212 students in grades kindergarten through grade 12, and the most economically disadvantaged with 59.9 percent of the students qualifying for free and reduced lunch.

Lancaster Public School District has been recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education for making adequate yearly progress for the past 3 years. The school's high achievement on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment tests has earned both the elementary and secondary schools a five-star rating from the State Department of Education in reading.

Much of the credit for Lancaster Public School's success belongs to its principal, Bradley Homstad, and the dedicated teachers. The students and staff at Lancaster Public School understand that, in order to be successful, a school must go beyond achieving academic success; it must also provide a nurturing environment where students can develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for success throughout life. All of the faculty, staff, and students at Lancaster Public School should be very proud of their accomplishments.

I congratulate Lancaster Public School in Lancaster for winning the Award for Excellence in Education and for its exceptional contributions to education in Minnesota.●

CHALLENGER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA

● Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Challenger Elementary School, in Thief River Falls, MN, which will soon receive an Award for Excellence in Education for its exceptional and innovative achievements in educating children.

Challenger Elementary School is truly a model of educational success. In 2002, the staff at Challenger initiated a grassroots effort to improve the quality of education at the school by implementing a successful literacy program. Their efforts resulted in the Literacy Collaborative, which is designed to improve reading for all children.

The school's framework for literacy lessons is based on providing multiple